

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 16-18 and 21-23 and indicated claims 1-15, 19, and 20 as allowable. On May 19, 2004, the Applicant initiated an Examiner Interview to discuss the rejected claims. Specifically, the Applicant and the Examiner discussed the functional language recited in the rejected claim 16.

Unfortunately, the parties did not reach an agreement. By this paper, the Applicants cancelled claims 17-19 and 23 and amended claim 16 and 20 to expedite allowance of the present application. Specifically, the Applicant amended claim 16 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 19. The Applicant also amended claim 20 to change the claim dependency from claim 19 to claim 16. Accordingly, the Applicants believe that the pending claims 1-16 and 20-22 are currently in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Under U.S.C. § 102(b), the Examiner rejected claims 16-18 as anticipated by Chaban (U.S. Patent No. 5,738,475) and the Examiner rejected claims 16-18 and 21-23 as anticipated by Lambertz (U.S. Patent No. 4,177,545). In view of the foregoing amendments, these rejections are moot. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner remove these rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

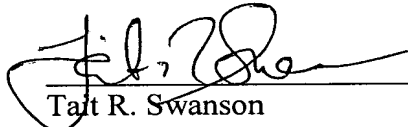
As noted above, the Examiner allowed claims 1-15, 19, and 20 for the reasons provided in the Applicant's arguments submitted on October 14, 2003. In view of the allowable subject matter, the Applicant incorporated dependent claim 19 and intervening claims 17 and 18 into independent claim 16 to expedite allowance of claims 16 and 20-22.

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims should be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve any other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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